

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1.-25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) A picture decoding method for decoding a bitstream, said method comprising:

decoding a coded picture included in the bitstream to obtain a decoded picture, using a decoding unit;

5 filtering the decoded picture to obtain a filtered picture, using a filter;

extracting, using a demultiplexing unit, filtering application information from the bitstream, the filtering application information specifying a picture and indicating which one of the decoded picture before the filtering and the filtered picture after the filtering, is outputted for a display process [[as]] for the specified picture and pictures following the specified picture; and

10 storing, in a memory, the filtered picture after the filtering as a reference picture for decoding another picture, using a storing unit, and outputting the decoded picture before the filtering, using an outputting unit, in the case where the filtered picture after the filtering is the reference picture and the filtering application information indicates the decoded picture before the filtering is outputted for the display process for the specified picture and the pictures  
15 following the specified picture.

27. (Previously Presented) The picture decoding method according to Claim 26, further comprising:

storing, in the memory, the filtered picture as a reference picture for decoding another picture and outputting the filtered picture, in the case where the filtered picture is the

5 reference picture and the filtering application information indicates the filtered picture is  
outputted for the display process.

28. (Previously Presented) The picture decoding method according to Claim 26,  
wherein the filtering application information is applied for the specified picture  
and each picture following the specified picture.

29.-31. (Cancelled)

32. (Currently Amended) A picture decoding apparatus for decoding a bitstream, said  
apparatus comprising:

a decoding unit operable to decode a coded picture included in the bitstream to  
obtain a decoded picture;

5 a filter operable to filter the decoded picture to obtain a filtered picture;

a demultiplexing unit operable to extract filtering application information from  
the bitstream, the filtering application information specifying a picture and indicating which one  
of the decoded picture before filtering and the filtered picture after filtering, is outputted for a  
display process as the specified picture;

10 a storing unit operable to store, in a memory, the filtered picture as a reference  
picture for decoding another picture; and

an outputting unit operable to output the decoded picture, in the case where the  
filtered picture is the reference picture and the filtering application information indicates the  
decoded picture is outputted for the display process,

15 wherein the filtering application information is applied for the specified picture  
and each picture following the specified picture.

33. (Previously Presented) The picture decoding apparatus according to claim 32, wherein said outputting unit is further operable to output the filtered picture, in the case where the filtered picture is the reference picture and the filtering application information indicates the filtered picture is outputted for the display process.

34. (Cancelled)